

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 26, as follows:

The oil passage 14i of the intake side cut-off mechanism 12i is opened when the linear solenoid 16i is deenergized, and when oil pressure is supplied, the contact between the intake valves and intake cams (not shown) of the cylinders #4 through #6 is released such that the intake valves enter a cut-off state ~~(an open state)~~ (a closed state). The oil passage 14e is opened when the linear solenoid 16e is deenergized, and when oil pressure is supplied to the exhaust side cut-off mechanism 12e, the contact between the exhaust valves and exhaust cams (not shown) of the cylinders #4 through #6 is released such that the exhaust valves enter a cut-off state (a closed state). As a result, operations of the cylinders #4 through #6 are cut off, and the engine 10 enters a cut-off cylinder operation in which the engine 10 is operated by the cylinders #1 through #3 alone.